

November

NOVEMBER:

Poems in War Time

BY

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DRRAW into thine own being the circumambient Power,
Till wholly invigorated by its divinity,
Thou art become enthusiast in every cell,
Poet throughout thy soul; breathing the fine
The starry breath of that spirit transcendent
Whose body thou may'st be, hast thou faith for it—
To vibrate, radio-active, with the intense
Joy of its immanent music, pain of the wild
Strange passionate intervals of its music,
That is no mere singing of words—pulsation
This, of celestial singing such as, it may be,
Thrills all the ether between the living stars.

* * *

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November

FIVE PRELUDES

I

UP dripping from the sea
Her weeds all watery,
She dashed against the windows as she came
The fringy hem of her wet
Cloak, and set
Me shivering closer to the genial flame.
Bleak was her face, turned westward from the
grey
Uncompromising dawn of a grim day,
As though she would not countenance
Even his ungracious greeting!
O, when she turned her back on all romance
And left, so long ago, the East behind her,
Her heart of hope already had stopped beating.
Grey woman, going by my door,
There's nothing can remind her
Of colour any more!

II

O BUT a wood on a November day!—
Do you know the thing I say?
Do you see the russet bracken
That the sunlight lies among?—

III

NOVEMBER

See the shafts of brass among the dreamy grey
Pillars, where the low sun strikes, flashing?

Above the cold still under-air
In the morning, pale above you,
Can you hear the north-wind passing
Over with his wingy flight?
Can you feel the quiet glee
Of the world's untroubled heart?—

Summer's dead, the bracken's dead:
In the earth the trees have buried
Safely with their sap their treasure:
All for wrestling, all for mirth,
They stand ready.

Do you see how glad and gay
Is the Earth with all her trees?
How they welcome in the season
Rude and gruff? How they give
Themselves to the November
Day, and to the rough
Hands of winter?—

They have humour to enjoy
The changing moods of time:
To smile with the cold light and say
“I take you, too, November!”

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III

HOW lovely the larches bear their dead
And the young oaks carry their widow-weeds!

Gladder than Spring it is to see their glory
When the air is cold above the snow.

I say it's a glad thing to see that tall young larch
Standing all maiden-stately in gold apparel
To welcome him who now shall strip her bare.
Or yon, her sister, lovelier in thinner gossamer,
As it were sunny gleaming dew-drops veiling
her:

And to know Winter laments naught but hath
his own pure splendour.

Winter!—when you stand here amid the wood,
There's some sublime gladness that summer
could not tell

Comes forth to praise you! Among these comrades

I hear another mightier word of freedom
spoken.

They weep, but not corrosive tears.

They let grief go, it also frees them.

NOVEMBER

Stedfast, evading naught, from life they withhold nothing.

Even their grief is presently a toy
For the spirit of young laughter.

IV

WHEN joy escapes me, it is not this sin or that I have committed, but, longing after some unattained delight, I have forgotten my Divine Companion.

Numb to His touch, what can I know of joy? It is only in His presence that my spirit ventures forth from its shadowy lair:—only responding to His touch my spirit ventures.

But I forget, and unaccountably my busy day is empty: meaningless seem the dear greetings of my friends.

In His love is my meaning: vainly I seek my self elsewhere!—I have outgrown my mind and body. My spirit is no more at home except in His companionship.

There only, is health for me, purpose and happiness. But I forget: I recognise Him not: I am no longer part of His delight, but my own burden: my body and soul heavy with a forgetfulness that cuts me off from knowing Him at hand: that, looking in His face, is still alone, and lying in His bosom, desolate.

NOVEMBER

v

IF we withheld thee not, O thou divine delight,
Thou radiance, whom we hide in our unhappiness,
Our days would shine like gold thread in the woof of night,
And God would take their labour for his comely dress.

O thou divine delight, did we withhold thee never
But dared with every breath to give thee utterance,
Fear would have lost his foothold on the earth for ever,
All of it caught again into the starry dance.

Aloof from thee, the oppressor holds himself, a stranger;
The unjust shelters him from thee with shields of scorn:
Mightest thou but rejoice in these, thou wouldest endanger
The last withholding thrones that keep thee yet unborn.

NOVEMBER

Thou art not childish glee, nor gladness only
 art thou:
Thou art Creative Power whom we have dis-
 obeyed:
Thou art the pulse of God within us here and
 now:
'Tis not of Death—of thee O life, we are
 afraid.

Freedom's Fellowship

I

SEATED in the World's Playhouse, I beheld
The Great Piece playing. Often I rebelled
At watching, and was fain to disobey
The Voice that held me at that Passion Play
Of Man's Redemption, a spectator, far
Removed from the actual agonists of a war
Wherein myself was mixed. Till onlooking,
There woke within me the æonian Thing
Displayed in all that action. I was 'ware
Of Him whom I beheld: the Actor there
Across the footlights, the Protagonist.
As one who had looked upon a glass and wist
Not that it was a mirror, nor whom he saw—
So gazing, suddenly, I knew with awe
It was no stranger, nor that Piece of Strife
Another than the substance of my life. . . .

Often on that Playhouse I'd turn my back
To wander in the woods of Goodly Stack
And squirrel-haunted Squerryes. There, the
trees

Showed me the sense of the ancient prophecies
That foretell a strange breaking-forth of power
Beautiful as the unfolding of that flower

FREEDOM'S FELLOWSHIP

Whose bud is this mysterious Earth, that keeps
The glory so enfolded in her deeps
No man, however nimble be his wit,
Guessing at its delight can image it.

II

AS a tall pine, grappling the rock below
To climb the unsubstantial air, will grow
On a hand's breadth of the hill-shoulder, so
On a mere span of space, therein set firm,
Shall rise that royal spirit that hath its term
In Godhood, will a man but give his whole
Passion and patience to become one sole
Substance for it, that he may stand sublime
Upon a shoulder of the Hill of Time
Witnessing to the Timeless;—may rise up
Erect, to dare the lightning with his top:
Wrestle with wanton tempests, and not break
In any of their capricious clutches: take
The sun's pitiless drouth, out of that fire
Fashioning fibres still to lift up higher
The challenging dark shadow of his crown.
Dizzily up he climbs, but he thrusts down
More than a pine into the secret place
Forbidden to the light, beneath the face
Of Earth that looks on Heaven. There is the
fount

FREEDOM'S FELLOWSHIP

Of the ever-urgent impulse that doth mount
Up in the sap and out into the light,
Carrying the secret of that recondite
That enigmatic power, which is the mirth
Vibrant in all the Body of the Earth,
The gladness of Her being, whereof all
Things that are Hers partake. . .

High in the tall
Pine's upper fork, the kestrel hath his seat;
While up and down its shaft with clattering feet
The nut-brown squirrel scrambles: screams the
jay:

The mild wood-pigeon all the livelong day
Flutes to his lady. But the unexpressed
Residue of delight within the breast
Of Mother Earth aches so for utterance
In man as to becloud the pure expanse
Above him, burdening the atmosphere
Wherever he is gathered, with the sheer
Anguish of her unbearable delay
Till he respond to her, and She can say
That without which her joy is yet unspoken,
That which without him must remain but
broken

Fragments and enigmatic words. O when
That which already is half awake in men
Bewildering their days with impulses
Mysterious that they know not to appraise

FREEDOM'S FELLOWSHIP

And so seek to evade—when it shall gain
Them wholly, and they serve with might and
main

Its divine purpose to bestow on Man
God's meaning, they shall utter, for they can,
That Life on whose appearing Earth attends,
That word of words that changes into friends
The foes that hear it, for before their birth
It cradled them within the heart of the Earth.
Then life's assembled hosts shall hear again
The fiat of creation, spoken plain
Among them all, and they shall understand.
Can you not feel the wonder close at hand!
The Earth is quick with it beneath my feet,
So nearly is the whole of life complete.

III

A ROOT was I, and burrowed down my
way
Year after year through sorry coloured clay;
And it was liker death than life to me
Through all that miry age of misery.
My spirit with enduring patience bore
By some mere pebble to be thwarted, or
To be encouraged by the slimy ooze
To new blind patient toil: my spirit whose
Manhood was made expressly for the wide
Regions of the light, where it would open-eyed

FREEDOM'S FELLOWSHIP

Enter some little into God's design,
Echo his windy words, and even divine
The informing joy, clear, lucid, beautiful,
That lurks within all substance as a soul.

I strove, I sulked, I struggled for my breath
In that dark under-life that was like death,
So strange to any enfranchisement it seemed.
And I grew strong in the dark and stubborn-
limbed

In that unkindness: yet withal I knew
My stubborn strength was of itself untrue
To something in me, though it was full-
vigoured:

For, nourished on resistance and the niggard
Diet of strife, I could not tell the whole
Truth that was kept a secret in my soul.

Somewhere—but far beyond hearing or see-
ing—

Somewhere upon the utter brink of being,
There dwelt another me, in other fashion
Occupied, fed upon a generous ration
Of open light and free air. I had seen
The immortals, in a world of gold and green
And azure, that is only just beyond
The surface of the earth, free of its bond,
And floating all, as though upon a sea,

FREEDOM'S FELLOWSHIP

Buoyed up on their aerial liberty.
But stranger than to know them anchored there
Almost within my reach—should I but dare
Reach up a moment from my groping toil,
Lift myself but a little from the soil
Into the sun—a voice familiar bade
My heart leave off its striving and be glad
In the translucent blessedness above me:
For these bright presences were they that love
me,
And I their kin, companion and compeer.
Inhabitant already of their sphere
Of iridescent light, was I, unknowing:
Groping below, my spirit had been growing
Upward into a leafy-headed tree
That floated even now upon that sea
Of windy light, and was companion with
Those earth-born joys that breathe immortal
breath.

I lifted up my heart: I was lift up
So upon gladness that I could not stop
Uttering twiggy praises full of leaf
Into that wondrous light as though all grief
Of my long labour in the dark were over
And I had now no more to do but hover
Upon the air, crooning my happiness
Fond as a pigeon. Now the pitiless

FREEDOM'S FELLOWSHIP

Lonely urge of my blind will down and down
Pulsed up out of my trunk into a crown
Of heavenly leaves: my stubbornness became
Gentle with gladness: I shook off the shame
Of my frustrated will, frustrated now
No longer, but achieved in every bough.

Now I have franchise both of sun and earth,
Till my last root is merry with the mirth
Of March, and I outstretch my branches bold
To joy, in the stubborn strength of that root-
hold.

I live in the earth: I am no flickering wraith
Of fancy but the embodiment of faith.

IV

THERE are great spirits that stand up
alone
As here and there an oak stands in a zone
Of corn and ample meadows: hero trees
Staunch in themselves against all enemies
And royal to small creatures in bad weather:
And there are spirits as great that stand to-
gether
In an inseparable fellowship,
Like the high pines on a hill-slope that's deep
In their long-fallen needles: spirits that are
As the high pines erect and columnar,

FREEDOM'S FELLOWSHIP

Because for many a lustre they have stood
Rank upon rank together in the wood,
Until each one is not so much a tree
As member of that great society
Of friends in whose association dwells
A presence I discover nowhere else.

And I have known a Quaker meeting when
The strangely still, intensely real men
And women ranked about me in the deep
Silence, were like a group of trees that keep
In their mysterious circle the untold
First and last secret of the manifold
Wonder of the world : a group of druid trees
Still haunted by the primal mysteries,
The elemental presences that are
Ever about us unfamiliar.

I was in a great grove of mighty thewed
Storm-challengers, that make a solitude
By their august companionship. Apart
Spaciously set with magisterial art
To entertain in mutuality
Those vast emotions that could never be
The guests, even of comrades, if they stood
Crowded together in a thicket wood.

I found a freedom in that company
Elsewhere I had not found. For to be free

FREEDOM'S FELLOWSHIP

You must be rooted in the rock, and keep
Your proper distance for the swing and sweep
Of the impassioning rhythm to vibrate through
Your being and make music out of you,—
One clear note of that full spontaneous speech
That no man sings alone, but many, each
Exulting in a wonder whereinto
Life pours the impetuous current of its blood
Pulsing from its one heart. Upwells the flood
Of joy in them out of its reservoir
Through every root that has gone groping far
Down through the soil to catch in the still deep
Bosom of the under-earth, that seems to sleep
Always, the secret thrilling of a life
Beyond the utmost reach of stormy strife,
Beyond exhaustion and beyond dispute.
Well may they stand splendid and resolute!
Out of the marrow of the world they draw
Their sustenance. The everlasting Law
Vibrating like a voice through all earth's frame
Vibrates in each, and every one of them
Shares its authority. Strangers to fear,
Most royally they give what is most dear
To them. Rooted in God and independent,
The ardour of their passion shines resplendent
As the moon's raiment when her beamy light
Clings round her dewily in the winter night.

FREEDOM'S FELLOWSHIP

v

WHO strays among them, let him have a
care

With what companionship he enters there:
For there are hours in which you cannot hide
Aught from the Trees: when you must open-
eyed

Behold the shapes of dream you carry about
The world with you—your dark or shining rout
Of dreaded or desired imagining.

To life about you leaps the Magic Ring
Your feet can never step out of, because
It is your self that the dark circle draws
Enclosing you in the curve of its occult
Desire, against whose logic you revolt
With half your will in vain. Darkling, it
sweeps

Its compass, and within securely keeps
You prisoner of the line invisible
Traced by the rebel half of your own will:
Invisible, till in this solitude
Of Great Trees it become strangely indued
With substance, and confront you with your
fate.

Ay, but the Wood is not confederate
Against you!—These are comrades among
whom

FREEDOM'S FELLOWSHIP

The secret that is in your heart may come
Venturing forth out of its secrecy
Into the worship that they make with me—
A spacious living silence underneath
A spread of branches interwoven with
Slant sunbeams, in whose wide beneficence
Our spirits have no more need of defence:
A space of sunshine that dictates to none
The joy wherewith he shall be clothed upon,
But only bids him free his spirit wholly
Of chattering care and murderous melancholy,
And give it to delight: sunshine that quickens
That singing of the heart that flags and sickens
Where love's a prisoner and hath not yet
Climbed up on to the windy parapet
Of boundary cliff that gives upon the vast
Expanse of life, nor yet had heart to cast
Forth trusting to the waters of the sea
Of faith's incredible immensity.

VI

I AM myself at last, with now no more
Fluttering against the pane, at the locked
door
No more entreaty. Now with bitterness
I claim no more forgiveness or redress:
The battle-cries that echo about me cease
To nerve me or unnerve me: I have peace.

FREEDOM'S FELLOWSHIP

My spirit from his age-long strife arose:
He stood no more contending with his foes:
Flung down his sword and shield: put off his
mask
Of warrior, and to his proper task
Turning with a quick gesture seemed no longer
The self I knew: wiser he was and younger.

I felt my body quicken with that might
Of mastery that is the soul's delight
When, from its secret chamber issuing,
Clad in the candour of a May-morning,
Comes the Almighty Fiat forth that changes
The aspect of the world in all its ranges
With a new rhythm, whereto all circumstance
Responds, and the eternal atoms dance.
Comes a new pattern, comes another norm
Into creation, and the subtle form
Of every creature answering to it, wins
Fresh meaning, and another age begins.

The peace I enter into is alive
With living life, that needs no longer strive
Because it is triumphant as a flower
Whereof the air admits the sovereign power,
The substance of whose delicacy carries
Magic that with the power creative marries
So that its ecstasy, and it alone,

FREEDOM'S FELLOWSHIP

Brings to the earth a hitherto unknown
Henceforth eternally recurrent joy.
When I assign my heart to this employ
It lifts me up that suddenly I dare
Find foothold on the skyey thoroughfare
To journey on my errands. Joy afresh
Sets her republic up within my flesh
With all its liberties of continence,
Where sullen moody disobedience
Answered the tyrant: for republican
Is the full-statured body of a man,
His freedom and delight are the good-health
Of that irradiated commonwealth
That is so capable of joy its cells
Conspire together against whatever else
Usurps its government, but all their will
Is Gladness, his commandments to fulfil.

VII

O LARGE is life!—The life I come into
Stretches so large about me as I go
Upon my errands, that I seem to be
Already a dweller in that Liberty
That is itself the immortal blessedness
I sought, but dared not deem I could possess.
I move about in it as in the temple
Built by my spirit for its worship: ample

FREEDOM'S FELLOWSHIP

For it as the whole starry-raftered Night,
But not too lonely-wide for my delight
To fill it, as the worshipping fulfils
All some vast minster, when, crossing its sills,
You enter from the noisy stranger street
And on the instant are a part of it:
So, when out of the traffic I come in
To mine own freedom, once again I win
The great horizon of Reality—
To know in everything I hear and see
My fellowship, as it were all one life with me.

More than myself it is I : In it alone
I am the master of the fully-grown
Faculties of my spirit, incorporate
Only in its high purpose to create
A body for my joy, a consciousness
That my delight shall hold against distress
If but for an hour : only in it I know
The imperative command, that bade me go
Forth into birth and being, justified:
Only in it, immortal, I abide
Set in my place, as in the firmament
Of godhood, till Its purpose be forspent.

For this my larger life is that wherein
I enter into Freedom, and begin
Participating in the power that flows

FREEDOM'S FELLOWSHIP

Through all the living fellowship of those
That are its members and embody it.
Though we be only simple folk that sit
Wrapped in its life together, one we are
With all the heavenly host that, star by star,
Declares God's Glory, filling up the span
Of worship, since the dark of death began,
With the inseparable company
Of them that enter into Liberty.

VIII

I AM among my comrades: my delight
Is all about me like a starry bright
Company. All the wonder in the air
Is actual communion that I share
With that great fellowship in whom I am
Enkindled from a coal into a flame.

Often when I am most alone that joy
Encircles me with friends: and they convoy
The ship of my desire safe through the shoal-
Waters into the open sea: my whole
Being is theirs because they set me free
Who catch me up into their company
And carry me out to the Open Sea.

When I am left with my defeated gladness,
And am beset about by sullen madness
That battens upon misery, and my numb

FREEDOM'S FELLOWSHIP

Spirit cries out for succour—then they come
Thronging about me, and I feel the anguish
That ate into my soul begin to languish
Because of them: I know again the strong
Arms of that joy whereunto I belong.
Anew each day with all my will I break
Out of the circle of these cares that make
A loneliness round the imprisoned heart.
For having once discovered myself part
Of the Great Life that only comrades know,
Something divine in me will not forgo
His birthright, but still challenges whatso
Arrogance of things seen would paralyse
The visionary power that makes me wise
To know my comrades of eternity
Sharing the moment of delight with me,
Respiring with me that immortal breath
That is one life beyond despair and death.

IX

FELLOWSHIP is a grove of trees that stand
Taller than the thick wood on either hand
As heroes stand than men. The heart lifts
higher
Entering here. It ventures to aspire
To its full manhood: rises up above

FREEDOM'S FELLOWSHIP

Its puerility to imagine love
And friendship as the god-like exercise
Of all the soul. It catches from the eyes
Of these companions glances that are strange
As sunbeams to the vulgar interchange
Of men and women: vaguely apprehends
As he enters here what is this world of friends
So new, so wide, so full of worship. Dread
Seizes him lest he let his thoughts instead
Of their clear thoughts ignorantly deceive
His soul, and he begin to disbelieve
In their heroic truth, convinced again
Of the obsequious truths that seem so plain.—
It is not death but doubt that comes between
Spirits that for a golden hour have been
One spirit of delight. Faith can make one
Of many, but in doubt's dominion
There is no bond: love falls asunder: life
Is torn to pieces for the pack of strife
To feed on: God is argued into naught
By men who cannot hold the faithful thought
Of his transcendent purpose in the whole
World wonder. . . .

Entering, I bid my soul
Beseech in veriest humility
To become part of it like any tree
Of this great grove of aspiration planted
Together, by the breath of God enchanted.

FREEDOM'S FELLOWSHIP

I feel the grave humorous light caressing
The creatures of the wood: no dread oppressing
The stillness with solemnity to crush
Their mirthful life: but the half-audible hush
Is of some gracious God whose presence gives
A deeper meaning to each life that lives
In his presiding splendour, until each
Becomes a particle of the God's speech
To tell a truth it cannot comprehend,
Save that to that delight it loves to lend
Its heart. Now he begins to utter me
Among them. Now mine eyes begin to see
The meaning of the grove, begin to feel
The presence that these living forms reveal
In every gesture, every living line:
For now their comradeship is become mine,
And this that, all together, they concealed
From me, eagerly now to me they yield.

There is no onlooker may understand
The mystery embodied in that band
Of comrades. Final truth it is, and they
Only can know it. He that would betray
The secret that is freedom must declare
The divine wonder in his being—bare,
Body and soul, in that translucent air:
Must become parcel of that infinite,
There is no other way to utter it.

FREEDOM'S FELLOWSHIP

O the world's meaning is a bud, a splendour
Sealed-up, saving as, to some spirit tender
To his caress, Love may vouchsafe a proof
Of what is yet hid. She thenceforth aloof
A little from the press of men's affairs
Must stand. Strangely, and all at unawares
The vision was vouchsafed: the unconcealed
Delight of earth. Hers now the perfect
wheeled

Glory of a hundred petals, still tight-packed
In its November sheath. O hers the Fact
That shall fulfil the world we sense and see
With its more intimate reality.

To Love

LOVE, to the little-loving nebulous Thou
 appearest:
Their eyes worship not Thee. Now that I get
 Thy range
How beyond belief exquisite is Thy form!
Thou starry Light-bearer, young-eyed Child of
 the Morning,
Impartest the purposeful meaning of the Crea-
 tion
To the learners of Thee.—O Joy everlasting,
We that learn Thee are one joy, one composite
 glory—
As a golden Dandelion, all our florets together
One flower in a field! As the sun, heavenly
 Dandelion,
Rays light forever out recklessly, keeps no ac-
 count of it,
What he *means* is to shine, God help him!—so
 is the lover,
So is the man raised up in Thee to the power
 of his manhood,
Stedfastly golden, resplendent, joy-outpouring.

TO LOVE

Yea, as the god-like Sun, that Unit of Lov-
ers
Stablished in heaven to radiate earth-impreg-
nating joy,
Are we Thy learners, together his fellow, the
Company
Of Them that Beget Delight . . .

To beget a love-child who would not give the
price Earth asks?
But O, blessed are they that, loving, beget the
invisible
Form of Thy pure power, mighty deliverer,
Spirit of Sunshine!—
Apart from Thee, Love, Power is a monster.
Empty of value,
Vain all the wealth of nations, if it be not for
Thy spending:
Wasted the resolute toil of a people not learnèd
in Thee.—
Thine is fruition. There is no joy but rejoiceth
in Thee.—
Love, lacking Thee, the ages miscarry. Their
gathered-up knowledge
Is naught, for without Thee Truth is not.—
Thou alone knowest the whole use of the
world.—

TO LOVE

The use of the world is at last Thy joy that abides:

Substance eternal, ether irradiant with the complete

Purpose of an inexhaustible life outpoured.—
He who carries the wonder within him knows it divine.—

Thou, Love, alone settest free.—I feel Thy passion

Patiently gather within me: Thy procreant power grow

Sure in me of its sanctity: not-to-be-thwarted: god-like:

All of me handling with calm clear eyes of decision:

Pouring my life forth with a Hand that is yet my hand.—

Thou duly directest the crawling caterpillar,
Else a vain destroyer of delicate promises,
Eater of buds:—Thou transformest him into an airy carrier

To and fro in the fields of the flowers' messages.

It is only toward Thee at last that Desire emerges

Out of its chrysalis into the light on wings.—

TO LOVE

Thou createst a whole out of this confusion of parts,

In Thee the excesses of passion that are not wholesome for life

Are justified: they come at last to their measure in Thee.

Infinite Thy demand, O Love, as the infinite blind

Urge of unuttered longing: wild, pent-up to madness:

Fiery mouth not to be quenched at dear lips: whose kisses

Poison its love, till Thou, God, overpowering That stormy power with Thy purpose, yoke it, exuberant

To Thy task of creating Joy not less but more passionate.—

Thou givest eyes to Desire.—All my meaningless parts

Love, when thou touchest me, Thou sanctifiest with sight.—

Thou makest whole that takest not less than all that I can be.

That only Thou ownest for Thine wherein a man pledges

Body and soul and spirit in one passion, holding Earth for his witness and the eternal stars.—

TO LOVE

When I began to love, and felt my soul going forth
Away from me to the Unknown, I was afraid to be squandered,—
So many a greedy mouth: many a snatching hunger!—
After, I feared lest this that was precious only for spending,
Life's own seed, in me hoarded remain, and perish.
Of Thee less ignorant now, I fear either death no longer.

Immanent in our loving, Thou transcendent, O Love, our passion:
All of our love together is but a little of Thee.—
Within Thine orb, as within the all-circling horizon,
Each of my passionate loves shines in his place, secure:
Ever-sustainer of loveliness, world-enamouring presence,
Loving them, I give worship, O not to them, but to Thee.
Thou fulfillest, O Love, my entire manhood with praise.

TO LOVE

Thou art as the Sun. Thou beholdest the ugly
secrets of shame

Averting not thence Thy clear eyes: changing
not into hatred

Their undismayed regard.—Derelict, desert-de-
feated,

The poor pilgrim of life in his last extremity
Catches that wonderful gaze and on the instant
forgets

His dismay at the cries of the flocking heavy-
winged birds.

As with the triumphing choral of the great
Ninth Symphony

Joy breaks out of his torn body to Thy em-
brace.—

Who now shall sustain the lad, the soldier de-
scending,

Snatched like Koré the Maid from an April
world, down

Into the bowels of death, into the underworld
air,

There to do battle, to make corpses with his
young hands—?

Only Thou art sufficient, down in that place, to
keep

His spirit alive, Day-spring of beauty inex-
haustible,

TO LOVE

Love Divine, in whose Almighty power I up-
hold him.—

When I forget Thee, how helpless my love is of
succour !

Love is a pitiful thing once it is parted from
Thee.

Delay Not, Love

DELAY not, Love, lest what I have of
power
To hold against Thou come, my marriage-
dower,
Be conjured, through some unbelief of mine
That doubts Thee or Thy coming, to assign
Itself to another lord, and so betray
My will to accomplish his desire:—delay
Thy coming to my government no longer,
So many a foe have I—but Thou art stronger.

When I behold the promise of the world
Blighted, and all a kindly people hurled
In God's face with a lie by one mad will—
Love, I know hardly how to endure until
My little kingdom be possessed by Thee,
There comes so many a royal treachery
To impose upon my will—so many a claimant
To power, kingly and clad in shining raiment.

I am not unacquainted with Thee, Love,
But to know Thee a little is not enough.
Loving a little, must I not admit
These that look like Thee?—Whole and infinite

DELAY NOT, LOVE

Is my necessity for all Thou art.
Henceforth I will do naught from Thee apart
That, love being all my business and profession,
All of my being may be in Thy possession.

The Greeting

HER pinched uncompromising face was pitiful

Seeming to plead for love, and yet with what a proud

Accent she said, setting my proffered love aside:—

“My friend, if you had only looked with faithful eyes

Into the truth I showed you, if you had not faltered

Upon the sills of sight and, guessing prematurely,

So misconceived the look in which I told you all As to make foolishness of it with your wild answer,

You would have understood what I can never tell:

You would have seen me, for I ventured forth to you:

To you, unseeing, I came forth out of my secret,

If haply, mirrored in your comprehending gaze, I might at last behold my spirit unknown to me, Know myself in your eyes, and solve at last my riddle.”

THE GREETING

I heard her speak, I made a silence of myself
That I might all be, as it were, one word of
welcome,
As it were hands held out all ready to receive
her—
Wherefore my lips were silent, hands folded
before me—
For her, all that I am was waiting in my eyes.

Then she came forth to me, radiant, a spirit
of light,
Before whose sovereign pure splendour the con-
descension
My fond heart had prepared was utterly
ashamed:
I saw her: I forgot my folly, worshipping in
her
That wonder of else incredible divinity
That searches the world through if there be
any place
Unoccupied by the busy turmoil of our cares
Wherein Its quiet hands may find employment.

The Exile

Heribert Freimuth, hyphenated American, writes:

I. OF GERMANY

SHE had a place midmost among the nations—

Woman, large-built, for the elemental throes;
Her frame a harp superb for the exultations
Of Life, what time his hands were magical
With starry rhythms to draw from her the
chant

Inimitable of her being, all
Mysteriously resonant—
And for his solemn, heavy-fingered woes.

Great-hearted she, and like a mother's
Her voice was then!
There was not one among men
Fibred for Freedom's song
—Her music—but was hers: and she was ours:
More than another's
Her mighty voice doth yet of right belong
To the great-chorded harmony
Of Man that wants it now.

Ours still the song that still
Vibrates with her own voice: but she—

THE EXILE

Bewitched by warlock Powers
That steal away the will—
Is stol'n from us.
Our joy that was in her they have made dumb.
Now in her place a stranger stands:
For face, a mask: her brow
Blind with a wild possession and piteous
In its blank arrogancy: numb
Is she to all old kinship, strange
To the sisterhood of the Lands.

As if caught in a curse,
She suffers all some werwolf change:
Horror is in her hands:
Her womanhood perverse
Preys upon that it once caressed:
The mother-fountains of her breast
Turn to a treacherous, devouring drouth
And suckle madness. Ay, she is
Changed all; but most her mouth,
That wonder-teller, fairy-eloquent
As April's when the influence of the South
Opens her lips with summer promises.
Her spirit on what wildwood breath
Would issue, leading forth for our embrace
From out the ever unspent
Treasure of joys she had in hiding,
Some unimagined grace

THE EXILE

Whereof, save from her mouth we had no
tiding—

Her mouth that now, wolfishly, barks out death.

O now with what vile rout
Of shameful things that wait upon her
She mocks at those her younger years!
Bewitched, she hath gone out
From the company of her peers
Boasting of her dishonour.

And who, of those that honoured once her
name,
Seeing in her still the light she used to be,
Howso obscured, shall lead her back? Her
own

Bleed inly with her shame:
Their every nerve aches to her infamy.
Who love her most, they are least prone
To absolve her unrepentant: to the last,
Implacable in their loving, they would strive,
Withstanding her false will, by any means to
cast

Out of her body the deceitful Thing
Whereto she hath given her womanhood
To be its substance, glorying
Because it pulses in her blood.
Vibrates and is alive
Throughout her many-chorded frame.

THE EXILE

He that most loves her, let him now be hard
Against her pitiful distress,
Lest it disarm his love of power to save her!
I dare not pity her howso by battle marred,
Howso sharp anguish cruelly engrave her:
Dear old-time loveliness.
For I was bred of her and know
Her too self-pitying weakness:
How loving Liberty a little, to his foe
She yielded up herself with wicked meekness;
For when her love of him brought her to peril,
she
Failed in her little love and grew ashamed she
had loved liberty.

2. OF HIS YOUTH

ALWAYS I see you, Mother, as a fair
Woman, pleasant in any place to greet,
And smiling with a smile
Childishly innocent.
O it is worse in you than any guile
That, evilly-mated,
You are so debonair,
So well-content.
Spirit so incomplete—
Soul so unconsecrated
By memory or passion, to rebel!

THE EXILE

I wonder if Demeter's sunny-eyed
Daughter submitted so
Obsequiously, once she was Pluto's bride—
Smiled so, being Queen in Hell
And mistress of her foe!

Did she—doth she so smile,
Hers is a better right than yours,
Dreadfully mild mother of my exile!
For though, in chambers dark
Beyond imagining, his love she endures,
Its nakedness is not so stark
As your Aegisthean lord's,
To whose tyrannous pleasure, rather
Than bid him do his worst,
Your too complaisant beauty accords
What erst
Was sacred to my father.

Freedom!—'Twas he begat me! He whose
high begetting
Sings through my being that I am his son
Sprung of his blood and nation:
Sings with your young voice, Mother,
In the utterly sweet singing
Of that forgotten March when Germany
Was at her love's beginning:
Music that still, in each and every one

THE EXILE

Of all my nerves is mine beyond forgetting,
My spirit's exultation
That he,
He was my sire, none other!

I was young when he perished. I remember
Those far days, and how then you delighted
In his babe. It is my November
Now, and your joy in me long ago blighted.
But in me it is ever quick-water,
The bubbling-up, throbbing
Of that long-ago joy,
That cradle-singing that before I was a boy
Was mine!
O, still a spring divine
Amid this world of slaughter,
It is the heedless gay
Trill of some bold November robin
Whose small roundelay
Breaks down my grief and sets him sobbing.

Though I shall always carry about the mark
Of that grim boyhood in a world all dark
To me—Orestes-like, sun-worshipper am I.
But chiefly Thee I praise, O pitiless Apollo,
That, unlike young Orestes, me thou maddest
not
With the Avenger's Cry

THE EXILE

Against a queen so miserably royal:
That me, O pitiless One, thou badest not
Wipe out in blood my mother's shame
Striking at her with dreadful hands.
But, westering, bad'st me follow
Thee hither oversea,
To this, that of all lands
Was worthy of my father's name:
America, ample, republican and loyal
To Freedom her first love, and arbiter to be
Of Justice: pitiless, clear-eyed
As Thou, shadow-denier:
Thou, chain-of-slumber breaker:
Thou, mocker at the tyrant and his bride:
Resolute world-awaker,
Multiplier
Of rebels against vain authority!
This is thy land, Apollo, and at last like thee
The world's peace-maker.

Wonderful as to a fugitive slave
When he creeps trembling out of the hunted
wood
Into the welcoming security
Of a friendly hearth, her welcome was to me.
Slowly to it my numb being unfroze;
Till when I understood
That she too, this America, had foes,

THE EXILE

How eagerly all that I was
All the Apollo-worship of my spirit, clave
To her good cause!

Cut sharply from its trunk, my twig
Flourished upon the free
Flowing, exuberant sap of that young tree
Of Liberty, whereon I was engrafted:
I made bold to declare
The secret manhood in me to that sun,
Responded to the greetings wafted
Me on that virginal air:
Freedom pulsed through me, faith in me grew
big,
Ousted my fear and took me all for its do-
minion.

With me there was transplanted
Into this generous soil, this orchard of my
choice,
So much of the old Germany
As it was granted
To a young lad to bear away with him.
Answering to the deeds of Liberty
There would thrill in the fibres of my being
Many an old clear voice
Of sunny Rhineland or of grim

THE EXILE

Forest: my new world was forever freeing
Of its dumb shame some unremembered part
of me.

And when in battle for her, I became
One body with America, and shed
Wholly mine orphanage of shame,
No more was I an exile hope-defeated,
Mine was this country of the exile's hope:
Even my father was no longer dead,
No longer was he of achievement cheated:
His spirit with mine exulted and found scope
For all its courage in the storm
That burst upon America: I knew him
Then ever beside me, and before
Ever that Siegfried-murdering Attila,
Ever that sinister Ægisthean form
That pursues Freedom if he may
Seduce his bride from him once more:
And here in this New World, wrestling with
him, we threw him.

3. TO THE ALLIES

O NOT because ye are guiltless, but be-
cause
In your own selves ye chiefly hate
The lingering old fierce lust to dominate:

THE EXILE

With Mammonry and Might
To override the faithful laws
Of Freedom, that uphold
With a divine equality, each people in his
right:—

Because the Day is not yet old
That broke for you upon the haunted Night
When lying Ashteroth
Had you seduced, in the occult half eclipse
Of her slim moon, to forego the bread of truth
And suck the baleful honey of her lips
That promise treacherously:—

The day is not yet old and still your flesh
Is tainted in you with the envenomed sweet
Of the seductress, as itself had been a meat
Offered to the Idol:—

O because afresh
Ye nations are returned to freedom only now,
She doth your hands endow
With virtue against this passion suicidal
Wherein my poor illustrious Germany
Gives herself still to Manhood's Counterfeit.

(Not as Psyche, deceived
Far otherwise, to her undoing,
Suspected of infamy her glorious Lover
And put the god to flight,
This hath fondly believed
The subtle serpent's wooing,

THE EXILE

She hath not lifted up the glittering cover
Nor guessed her shameful plight.)

Tyrannous lies on her still
The haunted night
Wound all about a will
That cannot but obey:
Till ye shall shock her wide-eyed to the day
Of True Power, and the glory that it is
Already in the awakened air:
Cheat Hell,
Shatter the dream she dreams and shiver
The abominable spell
As kindliness could never!

Then shall she see how graciously beyond
The hard horizon edge
Apollo lifteth up his shining wand:
Then shall she hear the stellar mysteries,
Mute to her all night long,
Make answer in your voices and respond
At the sign of a new day:
Then shall she know the august
High privilege
Of Very Power
That is divinely strong,
For like the sun in his uprising,
He cannot help but must

THE EXILE

Evoke with magic ray
The myriadicity of joy, surprising
Out of each indistinguishable clod of clay
A different flower:
She too, awake, shall say
“I can no more contend against this power.”

Ye shall shock her wide-eyed,
Because, awakened from your own so-heavy
 dreams of pride,
Already in yourselves
Ye begin to know the quick thrill
That is like the little feet of elves
Merry in a hill:
Already the numb, the cold
Separate molecules of your earth
Have begun stirring toward the summer, and
 grown bold
With February mirth
To conspire together and loose the hold
Of separation: ye commence
Telling, among the astonished rocks and roots
With eager, brave inconsequence,
Of the April shoots
That are to issue thence.

Among you is beginning
Another year, another age!
And she,—

THE EXILE

Her false fond dream irrevocably fled,
The Furies she invited having spent their rage
And sunk exhausted on their leagues of dead—
She shall awake, but first to see
In the blank dawning of disaster,
Her cannon grinning
Upon her, with delight insane
Of that first crime, preluding vaster,
Wherein, betraying a little people's trust
By the mere sacrilege of Power,
She trod its valour for an hour
Into the nameless dust,
And branded in her brain
For all eternity
BELGIUM—challenge forever
To whoso would endeavour
Henceforward to seduce
Her spirit: there, blazing behind her eyes,
With inarticulable agonies
Fiery to wither and annihilate
Any least creeping shadow of thought
Ere it can whisper an excuse
That might abate
The horror of her soul
For this, unspeakable, that she hath wrought.

O, presently across this trampled slough
Of bloody hours,

THE EXILE

Will lie the reconciling light,
And grass and gracious meadow flowers
Will cover it from sight:
To her too, will return the blessed days
Of vision: Life's amaze
Will kindle in that brow,
And deep within that tortured brain
There will well-up anew the healing spring
Of music, for whose mighty murmuring
The heart o' the earth is fain.

Presently!—O but first,
(There is no cure else for this obscene posses-
sion)

Down must she go under defeat
And fling her boasting down.
Either herself must perish
With her deceit,
Or she shall cease to cherish
This shadowy Thing accurst
This Hell-begotten Hope,
That she crowned with the high crown
Of her pride.
On no side
Evasion: no new scope
Left it: but blank surrender and abject con-
fession. . .

THE EXILE

Then with the end of strife
Comes knowledge of her need—
To repent: to take the oath
To Liberty: to plead
—If such a thing might be—
That, after final rout,
With all the battle won,
Truth should lay by now sword for surgeon's
knife:
Discover in his hiding, and pluck out
Of his hold in the quick of the brain
That greedy, that malignant growth
Which like a heaven-obscuring tree
Shadowed her days, and shut her from the
Sun
That shining upon all the lands shone upon
hers in vain.

Siegesallee Fantasia

*The Avenue of Hohenzollerns near Berlin.
Enter, in full fig, his scabbard dragging at
his heels, the KAISER, talking to himself:*

I'LD like to pack these ancestors of mine
To Königsberg or somewhere over-Rhine
Where they could not keep watch upon me!

How,

With them about me, can I face the now
Obvious fact I need not specify?

Old William with his paternal look
Seems always to be calling me to book:—
Bismarck made fun of him: why cannot I?
And these huge Fredericks in a double row,
Electors, kings and what-nots: I could go
Crazy, seeing them stand, week after week
Glaring at me! I've got a mind to tweak
That Frederick-William's beard, and make him
speak,

Pompous old marble idiot! If they'd only
Say what they mean, I shouldn't feel so lonely
Among them.—But nobody ever said
That to me.—Well, he would have lost his
head

For his fool's trouble!—But suppose, suppose

SIEGESALLEE FANTASIA

Someone had spoken truth to me! Who
knows—?

I *might* have listened. One in whose aspect
My Prussian-eagle eye could not detect
Any self-interest or any fear.

For once I should have relished not to hear
My All-highness spoken of. If, let us say
Some Roosévelt, fresh from America
Had flouted all my favourites, confronted
Flattery with stark fact: relentless, hunted
Down the deception that we practise, under
My very eyes; with lightning to my thunder
Had answered like a good Republican:
Had made me wrestle with him, man to man,
Bound only by the hard rules of the Ring—
And he the better man because no king.
Would I have taken a drubbing from him?

Well

That is a thing I'll argue out in Hell
When we make nights of it around the blaze
To keep away the memory of these days.

I've had twenty-eight years of Kaisering
And, good God, it's enough! But how to fling
The bauble from me with these looking on!
My spirit might be an automaton
For all they care, and not like Alexander's
Hungry for worlds to conquer, that I can't,
Since first I made a mess of it in Flanders.

SIEGESALLEE FANTASIA

The thing is plain. Since other worlds I want
I'll have to look for them where I can find
them.

The screens of death are solid. But behind
them

There must be what I am in search of—
Change,

And room for my ambition's farthest
range! .

(*He glances impatiently at his wrist watch*)
Now where's Our Old Ally? The fellow's
late,

Confound him! But here comes old honest
pate.

*Enter old MICHAEL, a gardener with barrow
and besom. He is dressed in a tasseled cap,
leather jacket, and knee-breeches. Seeing
the KAISER, he salutes with military gesture.*

KAISER (*benevolent to an ancient retainer*). .

Good morning to you, Michael.

MICHAEL (*shaking his head*). It's a sad
Dark morning, Master, as we ever had.
Beg pardon, it is better where you be
Up yonder, but it's bad for such as we.

KAI. I am surprised, old friend, to hear you
grumble.

Whatever grief may fall upon the humble

SIEGESALLEE FANTASIA

Remember heavier falls on Us: We bear
The burden of the Empire. None may share
What We must carry.

MICH. Hearken now, All-Highest!
When you go reckoning up the chaps you've
got

I'm "old man Michael," ain't I? Toughest,
dryest,

Stubbornest, old curmudgeon of the lot?

KAI. What's in your head this morning,
out with it.

MICH. I've been a soldier and I've done my
bit:

Sergeant I was under the old king here;
And "our Fritz," him, your father. It's a
queer

Thing that I'm telling you, but it's a true:
Soldiering's done with.

KAI. Long ago, for you! . .

MICH. It isn't that way you can save the
folk:

And it needs saving, for our hearts are broke,
So that we can't so much as go to church.
So, Master, if you leave us in the lurch,
As you might say, we're perished.

KAI. When did we
Hohenzollerns, desert our peasantry
Of the Mark? Since five full centuries ago

SIEGESALLEE FANTASIA

Led by the voice that we have come to know
For God's own Word within us, Frederick first
Left his rich lands to redeem one accurst,
Converting its mere sand into a rock
Of bronze against which all the nations shock
Their enviousness in vain. This miracle
To God's praise we have wrought: unto His
Will

We've shaped the stubborn metal of this folk,
Till in our hands it is a living sword:
And now the Mark toils in the easy yoke
Of a divinely led and loving Lord.

MICH. That's just where you mistake,
Master. This people
Is a lost people. Each young man's a cripple
That's not a corpse. But there's worse still
than that,
For each new child they get's a devil's brat
Marked for damnation. People of the Mark,
Ay, of the Devil's Mark—that's us!—And
hark,
Master, there's nary good that we can do
Ourselves, there's only one can save us . . .
you.
Not by the sword, but yet the sword's a sign
Grasped by the blade, as often I've held mine
And seen it was a Cross, and wondered when
There would be found some Holy One again

SIEGESALLEE FANTASIA

To hang there and redeem us with his passion.

KAI. (*severely*). Old man, you should not
rant in heathen fashion

Of what you do not understand. The price
Of our salvation is not asked for twice.

God paid it once for all. Each German man,
Woman and child He bought out of the ban
That lies upon the world because of sin.

Are you a Brandenburger and begin
Speaking to us of a lost people? We
Hold the salvation of our Germany
Secure within our care: to doubt of it
Is the sure symptom of a crazy wit.

MICH. Ay, Master, you're our pledge, and
God be praised

For that! But my old wife at home she's
crazed;

Sits in the chimney-corner all a-dodder
Muttering "Give me again my cannon-fodder"
(Her twenty grandsons that she doted on)
And sits and curses God. To look upon
You'd say she was a saint. I gets me gone
Out of my little mad-house, every day
Comes here and works among my kings. It's
they

As comfort me. Wonderful thoughts do keep
A-running through my noddle while I sweep
The leaves up that are always falling down:

SIEGESALLEE FANTASIA

Strange high thoughts that belong under a
crown

And not a *zipfelhaube!* Mark my word,
Master. The whisperings I have overheard
Were meant for you, but as you were not
near

They said "This is a good old harmless fool
As never saw the insides of a school,
If we can only make old Michael hear
He'll take our message to the Emperor."

KAI. We cannot listen to you any more.
Go now, get to your sweeping——

MICH. (*sweeping*) What they said
Day in, day out, rings in old Michael's head:
"Tell him: the soldier's day is done,
Another better day's begun
With a new glory in it!"

KAI. Go further from us there!—But, stay
a minute,
What's this about new glory?

MICH. (*as before*) And they said—
Day in, day out, it runs in Michael's head—
"Tell him: there shines a glory on
The cross that is not on the crown,
Would he reach up and win it,
Tell him: the world would now repent
And live again the life it's meant
To live, would he begin it."

SIEGESALLEE FANTASIA

[OUR OLD ALLY, who has been sitting perdu
behind the statue of the Emperor William,
here makes himself seen and catches the
KAISER's eye, who promptly dismisses
MICHAEL.]

OUR OLD ALLY (*looking curiously like Dr. Dryander, advances from amid the dead Hohenzollerns*) Our scourge! Our Attila!—

KAI. (*saluting*). Our Old Ally!

O.O.A. Whenever you're in trouble We
are by.

KAI. We sought You on this Path of Vic-
tory

In the august company that is fitting . . .

O.O.A. (*with an inclusive gesture*). For
Us.

KAI. Amid our sovereign Family
We sought you.

O.O.A. We were waiting for you, sitting
Beside your grandfather the Emperor
And our first William, our good simple friend.
We both have many things to thank him for.

KAI. (*impatiently*) Yes, yes! but We have
little time to spend
And weightiest matters . . .

O.O.A. Upon us depend
Whenever care weighs heavy on your shoulders.

KAI. Spare us your rhetoric!—

SIEGESALLEE FANTASIA

O.O.A. (*admiringly*). You're more imperious

Each time we meet. What an impatience smoulders

Within those royal orbits: something serious Must have befallen. Have We somewhere hurt

Your delicate majesty with zeal mistaken?

To each his manners! We too, can be curt.— The pledge we made each other stands unshaken:

Still We supply the Power that still you want.

KAI. This power of yours that was so loud a vaunt

We have tried and found it insufficient for The task we have begun.

O.O.A. You can have more, There still is plenty: it calls out for using.

KAI. You are pleased to jest!

O.O.A. You too, become amusing!

KAI. What good to Us is power of the wrong kind?

O.O.A. Ah, yes, we know the tool's always the wrong one

Of a Monday morning!—Presently you'll find It's still the German Sword, the trusty, strong one,

That rattles so divinely!

SIEGESALLEE FANTASIA

KAI. Even Our Sword
Has failed to make this hand of ours adored.

O.O.A. It seems our power is the wrong
kind of power
Because it is unkind! So you've turned Giaour
From the True Faith!

KAI. You mock me in your beard!

O.O.A. Indeed, no!—

KAI. (*expanding*). I am sick of being feared,
I am tired of all this avenue of kings:
Weary of pulling all the silly strings
Of this great puppet-show! O I am done
With navies and with places in the sun.

I have had all too much of power, too much
Of Germany. I swear I loathe the touch
Even of my sword, and to tell truth, I'd die
Rather than go on being your Ally
Another day. I have had Michael here—
Not the Archangel, my plain German
Michael,—

We've talked together, and it's all come clear.
I have been living in another cycle
Of the world—think of it!—and an off-cast
one!

When here's a new, beginning:—O a vast one
Beyond those tales you entertained me with.
Already I see my old self as a myth
Of the forgotten days of Grail and Joust!

SIEGESALLEE FANTASIA

Farewell! I go to greet the new!

O.O.A. (*aside*) Faust! Faust!

KAI. (*returning*) But I forgot: there are
things to be arranged!

In this to-morrow's world Our part is changed.
We shall put by the sword and give release
To our armed host, and become Prince of
Peace.

We feel the War-lord grows anachronistic.

At bottom We have always been a mystic.

We foreknew when We stood on Olivet
And wept over Jerusalem, that yet
We too, should suffer: We too, should redeem
The erring nations from the fond false dream
Wherein they dwell: in Us, also, the power
Of Gospel-love should find its passion-flower:
We should be lifted up and all would see
Our body broken for Humanity.

For this We claim your help. To you, We
feel

How mightily our purpose must appeal.

O.O.A. (*hesitating*) A new part for a Ho-
henzollern, eh!

I wonder what the Family will say.

And what henceforth you'll do with your right
hand

When no hilt's handy to it?—But command!

We will fulfil your orders as of old.

SIEGESALLEE FANTASIA

KAI. The change is good to us because it's bold.

Half-measures do not catch the public eye.
Once it is understood that We shall die
A willing sacrifice for all men's good . . .
Do you not see, *when it is understood!*
We shall have superadded to the story
Of our tremendous House another glory
Such as will swallow up the rest and hold
The imagination of the world for ever.

O.O.A. We will so match your deed with
our endeavour
No one shall tell the gilding from the gold.
KAI. No word of yours to-day but is dis-
cordant
With our high mood! Your wit that once was
mordant
Is now a clown's. Can no occasion oust
This ribald habit?

O.O.A. My good worthy Faust!
To-day you really seem to have grown blind,
Hypnotised not to see what lies behind
This cardboard Siegesallee puppet-show
Wherein you play the Kaiser!—But you know
Me very well—the spirit that affirms
The proper half of truth, which is far better
Than like a pedant, to spell every letter
Where some of them, being unfamiliar terms,

SIEGESALLEE FANTASIA

Inevitably raise misunderstanding!
The whole of truth is like a flight of stairs
That's far too slow to climb: at unawares
I leap the people up, landing by landing!
My better part of truth is like a lift,
It gets them to the top without the trouble:
Half though it be, it is worth more than double
To any ruler, taken as a gift.

KAI. (*doubtfully*) A gift?

O.O.A. Oh, as for that, I have my wages,
Though on my tongue the old-fashioned word
sound odd.

A Hohenzollern now for several ages
I've valeted as his familiar god.
(What other house can boast a deity
As practical as yours, Vulcan or Venus
Or Mars?) It's simply understood between
us,

The royal Us signifies you and me.
Between us only, but for all the rest
My part, as you may say, is a dead letter,
Acknowledged, but as good as unexpressed,
For here, as always, the half-truth's the bet-
ter.

KAI. Come now, to work! Your words
are all too plenty.

O.O.A. With pleasure: shall I call up four
and twenty

SIEGESALLEE FANTASIA

Brand-new, fully munitioned, army corps,
And let old Hindenburg wind up the war?

KAI. No, that is not the way the war shall
cease.

We've had enough of playing Goth and Van-
dal:

Now We'll be recognised as Prince of Peace.

O.O.A. You really think the game is worth
the candle?

Your mind is set on it?

KAI. Our mind is set
On this new title that We have not yet.

O.O.A. We've but to whistle Peace and
she'll arrive

In her tremendous car. A Juggernaut
Over obsequious nations you shall drive,
Vishnu's avatar!

KAI. You mistake our thought.
We will be lifted up that We may draw
The eyes of all men to Ourselves with awe
Of this that never Hohenzollern did
Before Us.

O.O.A. Your great deed shall not be hid!
We'll have it filmed for the ages yet to be
When all the universe is Germany.
But now before we call her—in my ear,
Whisper—what is it you have grown to fear
More than the last of terrors, for I think

SIEGESALLEE FANTASIA

You know the kind of cup you'll have to drink—

Unless of course the whole thing is a bluff.

KAI. We Germans fear God only . . .

O.O.A. O enough
Of that! We Germans understand each other!
We're not a Bonn *festkommers*, but a brother
Orator. Come now. What is this you dread
So much you'd rather be a ghost instead
And lodge with me for ever?

KAI. As for you
We have no terror of what you can do.

O.O.A. Not if I turned old Michael's heart
away.

KAI. (*startled, but recovering himself*) You
daren't do that, for then he'd cease to pay
Honour as well to you. You can afford
As ill as I not to be Michael's lord.

O.O.A. There's no denying what you hint
is true,
Though I have other subjects—more than you.
However, I'll concede it. It was partly
Because it's mine I guessed your dread so
smartly.

What you dread is to lose the simple thing
Without which nobody could be a king.
And what I dread—a little less, maybe—
Is to cease being feared in Germany.

SIEGESALLEE FANTASIA

An uncrowned king and an ungodded devil
Sink at a single stroke below the level
Of consciousness: and that we cannot. No,
We must hold on together even though
The price be the uncomfortable Cross
(For you!)—It *will* secure us both from loss.
You're positive of that? (KAI. *nods.*) Well,
 let us trust

The actuaries are right.

KAI. It will. It must.
There is no other way for Us at all.

O.O.A. (*considering*) A Hohenzollern
 couldn't learn to crawl
As a poor devil might?

KAI. Certainly not.
We'll set it here upon this very spot.
O.O.A. Then, hang it all!—the crosses must
 be got.

KAI. Crosses? There is but one: and that
 shall stand

Heaven high.

O.O.A. But you will have on either hand . . .

KAI. Nor Pope nor Sultan shall with Us
 divide

This signal glory.

O.O.A. No, but malefactors. . . .

KAI. Sirrah! upon this stage there are no
 actors

SIEGESALLEE FANTASIA

But the All-highest.

O.O.A. We'll not be denied! (*He produces a scroll with the inscription:*
"It was to save Our people that We died!"

The Blacksmith

WHAT have you in your stithy, Thor,
That now you make your bellows roar
So terribly within?

What is there hidden in the heat
That now you snatch it forth and beat
With such huge din?

He shouted—for he would not cease
Hammering—“What I make is peace!
Amid this clang of war
I shape to’t—I who have the skill—
The stubborn steel of all men’s will.”
—So I heard Thor.

The metal rhymed the word he spoke
As though each awful hammer-stroke
Gave freedom and release:
Under the blacksmithing of Thor
Anvil and steel together swore
World oath of peace.

He took me also, and his blast
Roared, as through all my being passed
The permeating heat:
Within the fury of the flame
I, that had stood apart, became
For forging meet.

THE BLACKSMITH

Snatched forth and on the anvil laid,
With sudden heavy strokes he played
 On me his music well:
“Death! Death! Death!” was the hammer
 clang
And “Faith! Faith! Faith!” the answer rang
 Clear as a bell.

Decision

TO-DAY'S the end.
There is no more to-morrow.
Now I pay: I cannot borrow
Of a friend.
I must shoulder all my sorrow
To-day, and to the utmost end
What I love defend.

At last, to-day,
It is not any longer
“*You* must go, for you are younger:
I can stay.”
I have heard the Voice that’s stronger
Than the other voices say
“It’s your turn, to-day.”

The Peacemaker—August, 1914

THE nightmare that was once Napoleonism
Stalks now the harvest-ready, unharvested
Fields at high noon, to blast them with his red
Laughter, loosing a final cataclysm.

We boasted him a dream, while he was whetting
His belly's hunger, for he never ceased
Behind the years to gloat on the fair feast
Preparing—all the births of our begetting!

Is there no spear with which to slay this Slayer
Of nations, this Dragon of massacre, this
Viceroy on earth of the Monarch of the Abyss?
Is there no Champion against Life's Betrayer?

There is a hand that yet shall slay the slaughter,
A brand that yet shall smite to the death Love's
Cheat!

Ringing across the world the hills repeat
Liberty's challenge, that the mountains taught
her.

THE PEACEMAKER, AUGUST, 1914

And she shall not withhold her hand for sorrow,

Or pity, or prudence that counts up the cost:
Either the day is Freedom's, or we have lost
Peace, and the Spectre walks again to-morrow.

She shall make peace, but never with oppression:

Hallowed her pitiless sword that it may clean
The whole earth utterly of the obscene
Presence that holds the folk in his possession.

O, she shall make an end of war for ever:
Victress, she shall make peace, a radiant-browed

Splendour of fear-defiant Faith, endowed
With all the heart of passionate endeavour.

A Non-Combatant

I

I SAW my neighbour going gay
To France as for a holiday:
Caught out of the cursing battle
Many a burst of boyish prattle:
Heard how many a devilish stroke
Was taken, laughing, for a joke:
Knew the horror, and the sin
In the horror glorying,
Boasting they could make a clod
Of any image of our God,
Boasting they could dim and dull
Love with hatred, and annul
Whatsoe'er is beautiful:
Boasting all the hideous boasts
That glut the ugly battle-ghosts . . .
Clear, among the starry rafters
Of the world, heard angel laughters
Answer with melodious shout
And put the ugly ghosts to rout—
Even while the dead lads lay
In their dreadful disarray,
Even while their women stood
Frozen in their motherhood.

A NON-COMBATANT

I heard the voice of Liberty—
That was and is and is to be
From first to finish of our span
Son of God and Son of Man—
Cry that splendid word of Death
(That we say beneath our breath)
In its whole divine intent;
And I knew the joy it meant,
Shared the joy that only they
Partake who give themselves away
To the freedom of the world.
I saw the mystic flag unfurled
Of ever-new defiance, flung
To the old world by the young:
Saw that flag—whose sunrise-red
Dissipates despair and dread—
Repay all the dead are giving
With its joy of mightier living:
For I heard the dying cry,
“Freedom! You shall never die!”
Saw their dying as the birth
Of that overmastering mirth
At whose face the devils quail
For their terrors naught avail.

A NON-COMBATANT

And I followed through the fern
Sighing, "They will not return!
To the board and to the bed
Grief and Hate will come instead.

The November sun was pale,
But the tall defiant trees
Shook their tops against the gale,
Spurning such impieties:
And within my soul I knew
My fear and sadness were untrue
To something in myself that would
Give my body to make good
My spirit's boasting: fain would give
All that makes me glad to live
For a weapon or a shield
In Freedom's hand, that He may yield
No inch to Tyranny, or 'bate
Any joy of His for Fate.

I believed that I would dare
Naked to confront Despair,
Having given all I might:
Would go dwell in the dark night,
Of my light bereft: defy
Loneliness, if only I
Could feel I had held nothing back
From Freedom in His hour of lack.

A NON-COMBATANT

Evermore I would rejoice
That I had recognised the Voice
Divine, and against any odds
Held to Him against the gods
And princes of this world,
Who have no stomach for the high
Mirth of His flag unfurled
Upon the sky.

3

When myself I utterly
Give to Freedom, I can be
The hateless weapon in His hand—
Let Him bid me, let me hear
The authentic voice within my ear
That I know for His command.

I have seen the eyes of Him
Who is Freedom : they are dim
With no doubting: naught of weakness
Dulls their gaze of piercing meekness ;
It is brighter than the sun
That I cannot look upon.
I have felt His living breath
Challenge in me doubt and death :
Who am I that I should bear
Only to speak gentle and fair ?

A NON-COMBATANT

I must be the battle-cry
Of Freedom, or become a lie
On His lips, when they would speak
Mortal Truth, though they be meek.

There is not, nor ever shall
Be any peace on Earth till all
Life's great truth be spoken out:
Never while we fear to flout
Half-truth; while we dare not be
Hated of complacency:
Never till we give our whole
Being—body, mind, and soul—
To Freedom, and stand forth among
Them who battle against the strong
Proud powers that put Him in the wrong.

A Schoolmaster in Picardy

M OONLESS, republican, an April night
That the south-west wind burnishes
until

Thick-set, the stars blaze in it with the world's
Purposeful thought, which Zoroaster learned
And Abraham was wise in. This, entrenched
In Picardy, he spells and understands.

Over him circle the Great Seven, sign
Of Labour and Promise. Through a luminous
field

Of stars unspelled, dips the Sun's pathway;
now

It leaves the Lion and the King behind
To enter on Astraea's realm of promise.

Justice, the Virgin, rules here: in her lap
Sits the world's hope: and shine in either hand
The Scales of Judgment and the Spear that is
A golden spear of corn, a Spike of Peace.

A peasant and a village schoolmaster,
Patiently he had tuned his little world
Scholar by scholar, daily into accord
With Peace, the music that he knew within him.
Rumour of foes designing war against France

A SCHOOLMASTER IN PICARDY

Was bygone folly afar-off that he heard
Smiling amid the garden of his school.

Far-off, till on that sudden First of August,
France calling him with her trumpets, his spirit
rang

Out like a trumpet answering hers. Within
him

Sang a strange music that he heard amazed
And knew the old happiness was at an end.

He hated war, as though somewhere he had
been

A mother, matched a body with a soul
And made them one together magically,
To know the cost and meaning of a man.

Peace was dearer to him than to another,
Gave him her heart, and like a bride demanded
What most he longed to give her, that she
might

Transform his ardours into life. But War
Out of that happiness he was at home in,
Like a pre-destined passion snatched him away.

Transplanted in the miry field of death,
He and the stars night-long kept company.
Often of her he loved War minded him :
Different, yet with the same divine denial
Of the great dreamy idols men bow down to

A SCHOOLMASTER IN PICARDY

With less than the whole passion of their being.
She was a sister to his lady, Peace:
And when her masterful accompaniment
Challenged the singer in him with its strange
Rhythms, his exulting spirit answering cried
New pæans against it in the praise of Peace.

Through all this visionary April night
He sees her face in memories. At Leipzig,
He knows again how verily it was she
Fanning the passion that swept Bonaparte
Back over Rhine. At Strasburg, it was she
Consenting not to a conquest that denied
The only meaning common to the world.
For as, when fond peace-makers intervene
With "Recollect, the man is now your hus-
band!"

The white-faced woman, answering nothing,
sets
Her clear stern eyes aloof—again he saw
Alsace joined to the Stranger. Faithful she,
Silent, implacable, France in her heart.
Fed there upon such puissant love as nation
Knew never, France became Joan's holy
France,
Country of Freedom. And the emperor
For whom she was the pledge of his dominion,

A SCHOOLMASTER IN PICARDY

Who upon her subjection had built up
Towery dreams, would he but look, might see
The real world reflected in her gaze
Hateless, mockingly patient of his might.

As Alsace, weariless through the long
hours—

The Plough driving its furrow to the zenith
Earthward again turning, descending slow—
He grapples with that false spirit who is
The discord among men, and cries against
Truth, in the name of some obedience it
Would tune the whole world to—and cannot
while

Justice endure. He strives, and through the
hours

Peace urges and upholds him, striving: Peace
That of all spirits is the only one
That can, to every soul and tribe of Man,
Give that to which his passionate spirit
aspires—

For it is in her eyes. Pitilessly
They demand all the irrevocable whole
Of worship . . . which long since he gave to
her.

Fighting, he fashions what the peace-mongers
Had made impossible. Dismayed they heard
The name of Justice, for they knew the price

A SCHOOLMASTER IN PICARDY

Was not in their white hands. The price slips
not

His bloody hands, nor his embattled brain
That being sworn-in against injustice, dares
Take the inane days and the nightmare nights
When there are no stars in the monstrous dark
That is too full of strange presences, bred
Of horror and corruption.

But to-night

Is one great fellowship of stars. Already
Justice commences. The whole world is flung
Open as never yet to the indomitable
Creators! Now they labour all its stuff
With hands nor false nor blind, with thinking
hands

Spirit-imbued: they put themselves to it
And it responds to them, and it becomes
Human, and brings forth beauty to their touch:
No here-and-there fantastic joy, but all
A consummation and accomplishing!

Out of the love-dream of the adolescent
Youth of Democracy a passion ripens,
No more the formless shadow of Humanity,
A fond vague aspiration cosmopolitan,
But now the emerging purpose, whole and final,
The Will to Justice, to begin together
The complete life of Man not yet attempted!

A SCHOOLMASTER IN PICARDY

Long had we dreamed, too long had dallied
dreaming,

Almost content with hopes we had not real-
ised—

Embrace of bodiless joys—our immature
Manhood spent for the barren behest of vain
Visions, worshipping them in our folly, till
Suddenly Death with hoarse voice shouting our
names

We awoke to the grim guns of the adversary.
Only then, will against will, sprang into pas-
sionate

Purpose effectual, Freedom, the lad's fancy,
Freedom, youth's romance, now manhood's
sworn

Oath to accomplish or to perish doing it.

German folk, in whom as in one strong man
The despot's will to power is all embodied,
Now rebuffed, as you shock yourselves against
our

Liberty-making will, another purpose
Shall you espouse! This greater, this in-
credible

Promise, to which we are now pledged, believ-
ing it—

Freedom, a commonwealth built up of nations
Bound together in faithfulness to uphold

A SCHOOLMASTER IN PICARDY

Justice against dissension and oppressors
Sovereign over themselves and over the earth.
Now together, we shall achieve what long syne
England, France, America, each proposing
Severally began and accomplished not! . . .

The upholding Presences depart. The stars
Pale : the rhythm flags : he is wrapped in loneliness.

Now at its coming the drab daylight proves
The night's promise inane with what a world—
What an unroofed charnel-house of a world!
But up above the horror on little wings,
The larks, Franciscan-clad, sing canticles
To the sun and praise him. Leaps this peasant
heart

With praise for the light of the sun returning :—

“Praise for the earth-born spirit of Justice!
Praise

For whoso is at home in poverty:
Puts wealth away : success for himself abandons
To be the enabling tool of that Prometheus
Who, Titan though he be, requires a man
To effect justice, without which the world
Fails of its hope and still remains a dream.

“Carol the larks above the cannon!—Praise,
Praise for the justice that doth undismayed

A SCHOOLMASTER IN PICARDY

Its dread Augean labour in the stables
Of massacre. Praise for the comrade-love
Of men devoted who, having forgot
To bargain, on the sill of battle are
Clear prophecies of the peace that shall come
after
Builded upon their fear-forgetting gladness,
Their surety of each other and the living
Presence among them of Our Lady France.
Praise, praise for these and Thee, O sun up-
rising,
And for the day wherein we perish, praise!"

The Hill-Top Wood

Up in the hill-top wood
I heard the oak-trees sing
As only the great oaks can
When the leaves are down, and they fling
Their arms to the utmost span,
And exult in their brotherhood
Up on the top of the hill.

O but the air was good!
And to feel them glorying
As only the great oaks can,
In their stubbornness and the spring
That is in it—as in a man—!
To exult in their brotherhood
Up on the top of the hill!

I never thought that I could
Know in my flesh the thing
That only the great oaks can
When the leaves are down and they fling
Their arms out wide—but a man
Is at home in that great-oak-wood
Up on the top of the hill.

I climbed up among them, I stood
In the ranks of the trees that sing

THE HILL-TOP WOOD

As only the great oaks can,
All of the Wonderful Thing:
There, to my uttermost span,
I exulted in this that I could
Up on the top of the hill.

This that I one time would
If, sometime, the hour should bring
Me mastery!—now I can.
I hold it from taking wing:
I hold it, more wonderful than
Any wonder:—the Making Good
Of my Dream on the top of this hill.

I tumble out all the brood
Of Doubt from my boughs that I swing
As only a great oak can!
I exult with my branches: I fling
My arms to their utmost span:
I have come to my brotherhood
Up on the top of this hill.

You great hearts!—you that have stood
On this hill-top uttering,
As only the great oaks can,
Your wonder—to-day I bring
Another fragment of Man
To be of your brotherhood
Up on the top of the hill.

The Quaker Women

FRIENDS, whom from our defence a Voice
divine defends,
Let not the thought of us make your obeying
hard:
Of your obedience we are the faithful friends:
Fear not for us: the God of love shall be our
guard.

He is among us here, though hid from our
espial:

It is of doubting Him our spirits are afraid.
For you we have no fear, how stark soe'er your
trial,
Though more than flesh may carry be upon
you laid.

His call ye answer. His the inexplicable word
Of your refusal to put forth your manly might
Against His enemies. We also, friends, have
heard

The Voice, and share with you all the wise
world's despite.

Blind as stamped cattle that fear will not
release,
The peoples herd together, panic on every-
one:—

THE QUAKER WOMEN

O if amid the battle, we might ourselves be
peace

And fear might fail as trampling over us they
run! . . .

If it be ours to endure Love's uttermost: to
suffer

The mocking might of Hatred when he breaks
his chain,

'Tis ye shall keep secure our vision of Man's
Lover

Redeeming mortals by the price of mortal pain.

Shall ye not, also, bearing the agony we bear,
With us triumphing over fear's delirium,
For us, even then, forsaking your strength
to save us, dare

Still with us to endure, with us to overcome?

Until our wedded faith marry with the creative
Power that through all the ages yet remains
unspent,

And unconcerned with death, shall know itself
a native

Of the invisible country of Love's government.

The Stay-at-Home

As a woman that is with child, my soul
already fosters
A life conceived within me, secret as yet and
sacred,
As though the herald, Gabriel, in a sudden-
shining shaft
Had bidden me glory in this I nourish for
men's joy.

At the clamour of drums without or bidding of
voices within

Can I abandon This? Can I resume my soul?
Am I also free to go, one with the millions
Descending at Freedom's call to the camp and
the yonder field,
Spending themselves for Her, as I fain myself
would spend?

He is not free to go who hath already gone:
To give himself afresh who hath already given.
Assigned already my place, I cannot leave it
and go:

Mine to stay, to abide, as a woman that is with
child.—

And I continue at home, contented, as one with-
out

THE STAY-AT-HOME

Trammel, if he should run in the race, runs not
but remains.

I see them go: my heart, going not, is one with
their heart,

Shares in their gladness going, that now to the
uttermost

Farthing they have responded with all that is
theirs, as I

Also wholly respond, with all that I am en-
dowing

The intangible hope within me, that is not other
than theirs,

The unborn joy I was bidden foster and bring
to a birth.

THE PRICE OF FREEDOM

The Price of Freedom

A FOOTNOTE TO EPIPSCHYDION

A large room at Pisa, 1820. SHELLEY, pacing to and fro. MARY SHELLEY sewing. He is twenty-eight, she is five years younger. At this time EMILIA VIVIANI was about eighteen.

SHELLEY. My spirit, my real self, once it was awakened into consciousness by your recognition, began to be aware of its need and of its power. I myself awoke to knowledge. All the argument about Truth ceased because I was face to face with Truth; or rather, the argument was changed into a way of revelation, the two parties completing for one another their partial affirmations.

But the great change was in desire. Desire is a seeking-together of parts into their unity. But when once the nature of that unity has been discovered, desire itself becomes different. For the whole, which is Love Himself, is henceforward awake within desire. It is now no more the blind longing of the creature after he knows not what. For now desire calls upon the God

THE PRICE OF FREEDOM

within both me and the object of my longing, so worshipping Him that He manifests Himself, ruling, ordering, illuminating, till the desire is changed into delight of His presence.

Love is no wantonness. It is the life of the awakened spirit.

The rhythm of the divine life within me cannot but vibrate with that responding rhythm, of which now and again it is aware in some kindred being. Thus vibrating together, we are married into one whole, as are the notes of a music to which each note belongs.

This realisation of unity is an extravagant thing. It transcends the ordinary terms of speech. It is beyond the measure of the senses. When it seizes me, it seizes me with actual rapture, so that I neither know myself or what I am saying. It is the passion of a fuller incarnation. Do you not see?—It is the Something in which all that we have won together is enlarged and heightened into a fuller meaning.

MARY (*without looking up*). So now it is this Italian!

SHELLEY. Mary . . .

MARY. Well! . . .

SHELLEY. You have frozen up my words. . . .

MARY. I want the truth. I can bear that so

THE PRICE OF FREEDOM

much better than anything else. It's the not-knowing what is true that I cannot bear. With her you are happy. When you speak of her, your whole face changes. But with me, see how constrained you are! Why do you stay? I will not keep you. For now, surely you know it, our life together is a mere lie. I cannot go on in it. One of us must go away.

SHELLEY. Harriet said that.

MARY. Poor Harriet!

SHELLEY. Poor Harriet! Poor Mary!

MARY. You dare to pity me! . . .

SHELLEY. Mary, do you remember when it was that Harriet said what you were saying?

MARY. Said what? . . . Yes, I remember.

SHELLEY. And how you said, "poor Harriet, she's not herself"?

MARY. I did not understand Harriet then. I was happy. Now I understand.

SHELLEY. You mean, Mary, you feel as Harriet did when she was not herself. So now because you are not yourself, you cannot understand anything at all. You have become a misunderstanding of everything in order that you may hold me back from what you do not understand.

MARY. Do I want to hold you back? But you—you do not know what you are doing, or

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where you are going, upon the current of this river.

SHELLEY. So many times you have told me truth, truth that I did not know till you had told me; but this time it is not truth that you are telling.

MARY. I am simply saying we must separate, since, however it be for you, for me this life together is become a lie.

SHELLEY. No, but your going, my going, that would be the lie.

MARY. Give me freedom, since you claim it for yourself.

SHELLEY. Freedom is neither given nor taken. It is the life of a spirit that is true to itself. Now, if you go, you are not true to your utmost self. If I go, I am but a traitor.

This I know about myself: I have all the weaknesses and follies of which you ever justly accused me:—(for you love and see me as I am. I have no trust in myself at all. I look to you continually for my judgment and my strength.) But yet there is something in me—it is you who have made me know it—there is something that is at last the real Shelley: the essential spirit—that neither passion nor any kind of death can dissolve: something to which I can and must entrust everything that I possess.

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Do not make me doubt that, or you will destroy the integrity of my soul which you discovered to me and have nourished. I shall cease to be a man: I shall go back to the days before ever I loved you: before you gave me the pledge of my immortal spirit.

MARY. When you loved me, then I understood. But now

SHELLEY. What has befallen you, that you say such a thing! As if ever now I could not love you: as if ever now you could be less to me —O God, how infinitely more!

MARY. A woman is either everything or nothing to a man.

SHELLEY. That is the falsehood of love's idolatry, which has nothing in common with our truth and freedom. . . If that is what you mean by love . . ! But it is you yourself who deny it, Mary: there is nothing of that in you. You freed me from that. That is poor Harriet's talk, that goes into madness.

MARY. I thought myself free and wise. But now I know that every woman who has ever loved is the slave of love. It is her nature. She cannot share that which is the very reason of her being. Men are different.

It is the eternal tragedy of woman that she is mated with her contradiction. The man's

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need for change is unnatural, it is monstrous to the woman.

SHELLEY. What strange, false doctrine on your lips! You strain and wrest your words out of sheer anguish, as though indeed your time had come. What if this is indeed to be a birth . . . for the new child . . . Freedom!

MARY. Freedom! O that is the word you are all always saying! A woman must not hold a man from his freedom—with *other women*. I know it is what I too, have thought and said. But now I know, I do not understand I only know—it is a lie. Until men get beyond the illusions of their desires, no happiness can be secure for women. There can be no real freedom: no abiding vision of the truth. A woman who loves as I do, cannot feel otherwise than as I.

It is the very deepest of my being that cries out against this wandering, this prostitution of the man, always pursuing some new pleasure, worshipping at some new altar, never finally faithful to any one. Whereas a woman, when she gives herself to love, gives irrevocably. There is no withholding, no duplication possible. It is her life, total and single, that she gives. She can no more share it with another woman than she can share her body and soul.

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You give yourself, for to-day. I give myself for ever. To-morrow you can give yourself again, as though it were a new self. I can never take myself away from you to give myself again.

You have finished with my gift . . . it ceases to have value. It is no good any more. It cannot be offered to another. I must find a different way of living: and once a woman has been loved, other ways of living are but degrees of death. Harriet's way was the best. But it is not for me.

SHELLEY. False! False!

MARY. No, Shelley, it is true.

SHELLEY. Wickedly false.

MARY. For you!

SHELLEY. For you, Mary: most of all for you.

MARY. I have always wanted you to be free. I am my mother's daughter. Let us be reasonable. It is hard for you too. When we are older and the fires have burnt out . . .

SHELLEY. The fires will never burn out! O, Death may quench this little candle that floats upon its dark pool: but as long as there is being anywhere this fire that is both my spirit and yours—our fire—will burn ever fiercelier, fiercelier! . . .

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MARY. Aren't we wandering from actuality? I should not have said "fire": when this sex-passion has died down in you

SHELLEY. Why are you poisoning my soul with worldly thoughts? When one body is done our love will take another: the fire must have its flame. While ever life goes on there must be attraction and fertilisation and birth. Ever new attraction and new birth. But never—O never—with denial and treachery to the old. Always and only as a consequence of the old. I love, because I love you, not because once I loved you. You have lighted in me this that cannot be extinguished: a passion you yourself cannot, may not now withhold. It is indeed I that love, but it is not merely I; it is we. You cannot take yourself away.

MARY. I cannot take myself away, and I do not love her. Your Emilia is nothing to me, but I must give you to her. I must share with a mere stranger what is nearer to me than my flesh.

SHELLEY. Yes—you must share.

MARY. But how, Shelley—how can I learn this? It is impossible. I cannot. If only it were some natural necessity! But we are young yet, you and I. Our children are but babes.

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You are more fortunate than most men who are born to love, because you have your art: you can find vent there too for passion.

O if only she were real to me: this convent girl, this half-woman, who feeds her sick fancies upon your emotion. She is but little better than a ghost; and it is horrible to me that you should squander upon her all the treasure of sunshine that we two have gathered into this focus of our love. I gave myself to you, but not for her, Shelley, not for her.

SHELLEY. You gave yourself to Love, never to me. Who am I that I should accept an idolatrous gift? Who am I that I should take you for my own, or offer myself so, to you or to another? As a companion, as a lover, as a comrade in freedom, as a partner in life's enterprise,—O yes, yes!—but that is not what you are saying.

We dedicated our love to freedom, having first dedicated to freedom our own souls. You are not mine, nor am I yours, save only in that. We have no use for one another, save in that. Any other thought is abominable to me—and to you!

And Emilia, she also belongs to freedom, as do we. It is in that I meet and am joined with her. Where we meet, where we love, where

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we are one delight together, there is freedom. . . .

Do not misunderstand. You have no right to misunderstand what you yourself have made me realise; freedom is the life of that in us which has the right, the power, the duty to be free. When I say I am joined with her in freedom, I say it out of the world of inspiration. I tell the last truth. Something of me that, without her, was blind and dumb, finds sight and speech because of her. I love her by necessity, as I love you. We share together in a life which becomes conscious and creative in so far as we dare love one another, as we dare to be joined and mingled in its being.

MARY. I feel that you are telling the truth. But is it all the truth? What is this in my soul that resists and denies—that forces me to contest your words?

I had always thought of myself as free, and giving freedom. But now I know that this is what I really am.

O, why can I not love Emilia? My deepest being longs for you to have all that life can give. But not from her, never from her!

SHELLEY. She is unreal to you, and so my love for her is an unreal thing, a fever, an infatuation. As such you hate and struggle

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against it—but with unreal weapons. Fighting this that is not, you too become false. And because this love of mine is false to you, I too have become to you unreal; to you whose intense reality is in your love, to you who only hate this one thing, unreality.

MARY. Make me see her as you see her! Save me from what I see! With my own eyes I can see nothing in her upon which any reverence can take hold. If only I could realise a spirit burning within her—and not be always thrown back shivering from those chameleon eyes, that bloodless skin, as from an empty mask. If I could feel her alive behind those fanciful words she marries so easily with yours!

SHELLEY. If you could *see* Emilia you would understand, because you too would love her.

MARY. O if I could. But what an “if”!

SHELLEY. You will begin to believe in her. You will challenge every day this mask till it yields its reality to you. Because I love her, because you cannot doubt I love her, you too will inevitably begin to know and love her. You shake your head, Mary—and yet your eyes shine.

MARY. I think I shall never be able to see her as you do. Our relation will never be like yours: and only, perhaps, in such a relation can

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her spirit reveal itself. I must be content never to understand. And it may be my love for you will be strong enough even for this last giving up to Love.

SHELLEY. To love is always to have faith, always to have more faith and more.

MARY. But this growth in faith demands a struggle in the soul that is little removed from actual madness. At times the creative forces of one's passion make one blind, make one cruel, so tremendous is their struggle with the stubborn substance of one's soul. One suffers till one loses hold of oneself. There are moments when I know I am not myself—moments in which I could hurt you, you who are so much dearer to me even than our children. What is it—tell me what it is, my dear!

SHELLEY. It is the birth-pains of the God. And who shall win to liberty save by this mortal way? Only through a sort of madness can we be sufficiently withdrawn from the grasp of our selves for this new spirit to take possession of us. To be shewn the throes of that new birth taking hold upon and shaping a beloved soul, this utterly humbles as it purely exalts the spirit.

MARY. I have always wanted to pay the price. I think I have never really wanted any

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happiness except upon these terms. Well have I known there was a kind of happiness that might indeed be otherwise won and conferred, but never the reality that alone I sought after,—the final good which a man may obtain in exchange for himself. If he keep back a penny it can never be his. For either the deed is whole, or it is a cheat. The payment is without withholding, or it is without avail. For this is just. O above all else I have loved justice, for the sake of Love.

SHELLEY. Without it there could be no freedom. Freedom is a perfect and final thing even as death and birth are in their order final. And Freedom goes beyond them. It is eternal life. It is immediate participation in the integrity of God himself.

MARY. But never without justice: never without wanting to pay the price.

Greeting to America Entering the War

A BOY, I dreamed that out of Liverpool
I sailed adventuring to the West. Romance

Presently led me thither, and th' expanse
Of your wide world of freedom did not fool
My April dream. Anew, I went to school
To wonder, for I saw all circumstance
Growing obedient to man's spirit, and chance
I saw you take, as it had been a tool.
But now, America, that we are set
Together down, commensal with the worm
At the feast of Slaughter, you have put a term
To all my faith's shortcoming; you have met
Our will with yours, implacable to affirm
The whole of freedom that was never yet.

HENRY BRYAN BINNS.

London

October the 28th 1917

Envoy

*THY love is all about me like the loveliness
Of Earth when she puts by the veiling of
the snow*

*And all her beauty of ploughed and fallow,
ochre and red,*

*Nourishes me anew. Thy love is all about me,
More intimately near my spirit than the flesh
Wherein I live and move and have my daily
being.*

*For only in the enabling presence of thy love
I can become myself, that else with alien speech
Hear myself strangely utter fancies foreign to
me.*

*Within thy love my spirit is confident, at home
As I was never yet in mind or body of mine;
For thou embracest me with that which is not
strange*

*To my imprisoned spirit, bewildered in the mesh
Of this incomprehensible, this unfamiliar world,
That by the magic of thy love is changed for me
Into a welcoming presence, friendly and won-
derful.*

